The A. F. of L. Weekly News Letter contains a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

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AGITATE! EDUCATE! ORGANIZE!

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WHY U. S. ADVERTISED ORGANIZED SHIP YARDS

Washington, April 27.—Certain sections of the United States senate shuddered when it was announced that the United States employment service would recruit only union men for work in Puget sound ship yards.

Secretary of Labor Wilson poured oil on the troubled waters by this letter to Senator Hollis:

"The statement is alleged to have been made that the officers of the employment service conducting this recruiting announced to the public that no one but union men would be employed and sent to the ship yards in Seattle. This statement is quite correct, but the senate should know that the shipbuilding companies in the Puget sound district have a written agreement with the metal trades council of that district to employ no one but union men. Consequently it would be useless for any agency to recruit any labor for these ship yards other than union labor. It would not only be useless but misleading and work a great injury on non-union men, who might leave positions in the middle west and go to Seattle only to find that under the agreement between the unions and the ship yards they could not be employed. The agreement between the shipbuilding companies and the metal trades council in that district has been in existence for a long time. This department or no other branch of the government is a party to the contract, nor was it urged by the government.

"The shipbuilding companies have simply agreed to the closed union shop in that district, and the agreement is defended by the shipbuilding companies and the Seattle chamber of commerce and other employers in that district as a measure of great efficiency, and the speed with which the shipbuilding companies in that district are turning out ships for the shipping board indicates the value of the plan under which they are working. If you will refer to the speech of Chairman Hurley, of the shipping board, at New York on March 26, you will find that he makes particular reference to the greater speed in shipbuilding on the Pacific coast than elsewhere. It is true that the United States employment service of this department supplies absolutely all of the labor, both skilled and unskilled, going into the ship yards in the Puget sound district."

$18 A WEEK NOT ENOUGH.

New York, April 27.—It is generally conceded that $18 a week is not enough for a man to support a family according to American standards of living, says the Charity Organization society, in a report just issued.

"In the society's own work with families," it is stated, "it came in contact, during the last fiscal year, with 5,909 families. A study made of [illegible] of these, with whom closer relations were established, showed the presence of unemployment and low earnings even at a time of industrial prosperity. In [illegible] of the families the male head of the family was out of work, and in 275 his employment was irregular. In [illegible] of the families the man was not earning because of disease, old age or because he was in an institution. The majority of the men who were working were earning less than $18 a week, an amount which at present is generally conceded to be too small to support a family of four or five persons according to American standards of living. Many men were earning much less than $18 a week. Indeed, in 571 families the earnings of the men were reported to be between $12 and $14 a week."

TO PROTECT SOLDIERS.

Washington, April 27.—The house has passed a bill limiting the fee of attorneys who collect compensation for soldiers or sailors under the war risk insurance.

"The government has repeatedly announced that the employment of these attorneys is not necessary and that the war risk insurance bureau of the treasury department will assist any claimant in the payment of compensation."

In reporting the necessity for this legislation Congressman Rayburn said:

"Shyster lawyers over the country have organized, as they usually do on occasions like this, to try to fleece these people out of a part of their insurance and a part of their compensation, trying to make them believe that it is necessary to employ a lawyer and pay him at least 10 per cent or something of that kind on the collection of their insurance and compensation."

APPEAL TO FARMERS.

Trenton, N. J., April 27.—If New Jersey farmers will co-operate Gov. Edge believes that the shortage of farm labor will be overcome. He declares that this state will form a partnership with the farmers in an effort to have crops harvested on time, despite war conditions.

The governor has written to every grange organization in the state, asking the co-operation of farmers with the state labor department and the federal-state-municipal employment service and the draft machinery in an effort to eliminate the serious labor situation. He asks the farmers to agree upon a standard of wages, hours of employment and maintenance of conditions.

UNION SUSPENDS RULE.

Seattle, April 27.—The Plasterers and Cement Finishers' union has suspended a rule that all time over one shift must be paid for at the rate of overtime. This rule has been in operation for over 30 years and allowed for a single shift and a five-day week to reduce unemployment in this seasonal trade.

The union suspended the rule so that the government would not be handicapped in its construction of concrete ships.

SHOE WORKERS GAIN.

Boston, April 27.—Shoe lasters of the southeastern Massachusetts district have secured wage increases that range from 10 to 21¼ per cent. About [illegible] employes are benefited approximately $200,000 a year, or $80 a year on an annual investment of $13 for dues to the Boot and Shoe Workers' union.

TAXI DRIVERS GAIN.

Rochester, N. Y., April 27.—Chauffeurs' union No. 548, affiliated with the Brotherhood of Teamsters, has secured agreements with the principal taxi companies in this city.

STONE CUTTERS GAIN.

Atlanta, Ga., April 27.—Organized stone cutters have increased wages from [illegible] to 62½ cents an hour.

BETHLEHEM STEEL CO. ACCEPTS 8-HOUR LAW

Bethlehem, Pa., April 27.—The Bethlehem Steel company has agreed to obey the federal law which provides that government work after eight hours shall be paid at the rate of time and one-half. It also agrees not to victimize trade unionists and to receive shop committees.

These additional proofs that the world "do move" were made possible by machinists who suspended work when the company attempted to put in operation two shifts as follows: One of 10 hours and 25 minutes and one of 12 hours and 45 minutes.

Enraged at these inhuman hours the machinists quit and adjourned to a hall where they discussed the matter. It was then decided to return to work until such time as some satisfactory settlement could be secured. The men reported for work, but found the gates locked and admission denied.

When the other workers learned of this situation only the pleas of trade union organizers checked a general strike. Through federal and state mediators an agreement referred to above, and which affects thousands of workers, was reached.

This is the first time since 1909 that the company has paid for overtime. It never paid for overtime after eight hours.

The A. F. of L. is conducting an organizing campaign among these workers, who are joining their respective unions in large numbers.

COAL FAMINE POSSIBLE.

Indianapolis, April 27.—Officers of the United Mine Workers have warned the federal fuel administration that numerous obstacles are hampering the production of coal at a time when every natural condition is favorable to maximum production.

The unionists say that these obstacles must be removed if a coal famine next winter is to be averted.

"Coal production is far below the nation's lowest possible estimated requirements. Mines in the states of Iowa, Oklahoma, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana and West Virginia are working less than half time, and in many mining towns large producing mines are actually shut down. Several hundred local unions affiliated with the United Mine Workers of America, suffering protracted idleness, have been forced to ask exoneration from the payment of dues. (This is stated solely to reflect the actual condition.)

"Like the deplorable conditions existing in September and October, 1917, thousands of coal miners are suffering for the necessities of life; not because they are not willing and desirous of working, but because the opportunity is not afforded."

It will be well for trade unionists everywhere to keep in mind these statements when opponents of organized labor strike their usual stride next winter.

BRICK OUTPUT REDUCED.

Washington, April 27.—The fuel administration has ordered a reduction of production of 10 principal clay products of from 15 to 50 per cent. This action is declared to be the forerunner of similar curtailment of practically every industry considered not vital to the war program. Parts of the plants affected will be converted for war industries, and men, material and transportation will be made available for the same purpose.

That the production of all building material eventually may be substantially curtailed was disclosed by the statement accompanying the orders.

INTERLOCKING SALARIES.

Boston, April 27.—Salaries totaling $498,719.88 was paid in one year to 46 proprietors of the 25 firms comprising the Boston Fish Pier company, according to testimony brought out by a state legislative commission. Some of the proprietors, connected with four different companies, drew four salaries. It was shown that these salaries were paid out of the earnings of the company as part of its regular expenses and before any dividends were declared.

ELECTRICAL STRIKE ENDS.

Indianapolis, April 27.—A three weeks' strike of the Electrical Workers' union, which affected a large section of Indiana, has been compromised. Wiremen will be paid 67 1-2 cents an hour the first year, 72 cents the second year and 75 cents the third year. They were paid 57 cents and asked 75 cents.

Electric shop men will be paid 54 cents the first year, 57 1-2 cents the second year and 62 1-2 cents the third year.

WAGE LAW FOR WOMEN CAN'T BEAT UNIONISM

Portland, Ore., April 27.—Wages for women and minors are regulated by law in this state.

The practical application of this theory is referred to as follows by the Oregon Labor Press, published in this city:

"Operation of the industrial welfare commission and the results obtained by that body in securing the rights of women workers only emphasizes the fact that organization is a surer guaranty of proper working conditions and adequate wages than all legislation which it is possible to enact. Laws favorable to labor are of but little value unless there is an organization of the workers to see that they are properly enforced and administered. Laws, like New Year resolutions, are quickly broken or easily avoided by crafty subterfuges unless backed by organization.

"E. B. McNaughton, chairman of the commission, in a conversation with E. J. Stack, secretary of the Oregon federation of labor, recently made the statement that women workers should not expect complete relief from the action of the commission, but must depend on organization to secure for them the full measure of their rights. He said minimum wages for different industries as fixed by the commission were not intended as a standard, but only as a starting point for a scale ranging upward.

"Minimum wages fixed by law are computed on the basis of the lowest amount on which it is possible for the worker to exist, and do not make provision for any expense which may be incurred by the worker in bettering his or her condition or in providing a savings account which is to be laid up against the proverbial rainy day. In all cases the scale fixed by law must be exceeded if the worker is to maintain an American standard of living.

"Proof of the superiority of organization over legislation may be seen in the better scale paid in all highly organized industries, such as the garment workers."

GERMAN HOUSING LAWS ARE BEHIND AMERICA'S

New York, April 27.—The falsity of Germany's "social progress" claims is shown in a statement by Gustavus Myers, who writes on Germany's housing laws for the American alliance for labor and democracy.

It is stated that New York's tenement laws and their enforcement have no parallel anywhere in Europe. These are the views of Dr. Nemenyi, of Budapest, who was commissioned by the Hungarian government to study American housing reform methods.

"While the 'survey' dilettanti have been going to Germany and boosting Germany's 'model housing,'" writes Mr. Myers, "after their return the practical housing reformers of Europe have looked to the United States for laws and plans as a model for European legislation.

"German official statistics have a high-sounding way of describing all living places as 'dwellings.' A one-room flat is thus held to be a 'dwelling.' The German official notion of what constitutes overcrowding is large and elastic. In official statistics a 'dwelling' in Germany has been only considered overcrowded in which there have been six or more persons living in a single heatable room, or 11 or more persons in a 'dwelling' with two heatable rooms.

"The two-room flat has remained the predominant working-class type of housing in Berlin and in many other German cities. These two rooms are made up of a combination living and bedroom occupied day and night throughout the year, and the other room a small kitchen which likewise is pressed into service as a bedroom. In these stuffy rooms there will commonly be found a family of four to six persons and boarders or lodgers besides. Often the husband and wife (and children, if they have any,) sleep in the kitchen and the other room is let to lodgers. Frequently, also, the two rooms, when work is done at home, are used as a workshop."

COPPER BARONS GRILLED.

Phoenix, Ariz., April 27.—Large copper interests in this state are not complying with recommendations of the president's mediation commission, which visited Arizona a short time ago in the interest of industrial peace.

The Arizona Labor Journal asks why a maximum production of copper is not being produced in the Clifton-Morenci district.

"Why," asks this paper, "were hundreds of miners allowed, or rather forced, to drift away from this district in search of employment after the last strike was settled by the president's mediation commission?

"At the smelter in Morenci, the property of the Phelps-Dodge corporation, they are handling the same tonnage of ore that they were handling prior to the strike, and yet the copper production is only 75 per cent of normal.

"What is the reason?"

"Do you call this complying with the orders of the commission, and does it fulfill the recommendations contained in the proposed plan accepted by the department of labor?"

U. S. WRITES INSURANCE.

Washington, April 27.—Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo calls attention to the law covering United States government insurance, which provides that if soldiers or sailors desire the protection of this insurance, they must make application within 120 days after entry into the service. No persons are insured until they have made specific application.

The entire life insurance written in the year 1917 by all the stock and mutual companies, fraternal orders, associations, and societies in the United States was approximately six billion dollars. The bureau of war risk insurance is thus, by several hundred per cent, the largest life insurance concern in the world. At the first climax of the government insurance campaign, insurance was sold at approximately a two-billion-dollar-a-week pace. On the record day of the bureau, applications for $500,000,000 of government insurance were received.

ANOTHER MUST-WORK BILL.

Boston, April 27.—A bill has been introduced in the state legislature which provides that all persons between 18 and 50 years of age, who fail to work at least [illegible] hours a week, shall be liable to a fine of $100 and imprisonment for three months.

The fact that the individual has sufficient funds or income to support him and his dependents, shall not be considered a defense unless he applied for work and has been rejected and has a certificate from the state board of labor and industries to this effect. It shall be the duty of the state board to get him a job if possible. The compensation shall be determined according to the job and the number of hours of labor, by the class of work and the laws governing it.

The proposed act does not affect workers on strike or persons attending school.

GAINS BY IRON MOLDERS.

Cincinnati, April 27.—In his last report on gains made by various Iron Molders' unions, International President Valentine says that 59 locals have secured wage increases, reduced hours and improved working conditions. Increases of $1 a day are numerous. In Seattle a minimum of $6.60 a day is established for jobbing shops. In a stove shop in that city rates are increased from $6 to $7.10 a day. In other northwestern cities the $6 minimum prevails.

GROCERY CLERKS STRIKE.

St. Louis, Mo., April 27.—Despairing of improving conditions by conciliatory methods, additional grocery clerks are joining the strike movement of these workers. Long hours and wages that range from $11 to $16 a week is the rule.

PAINTERS RAISE WAGES.

New London, Conn., April 27.—It was necessary for Painters' union No. 887 to suspend work for a short time before employers would accept a new wage scale which calls for $4.50 for painters and $4.75 for paper hangers.

WAITERS GET RAISE.

Seattle, April 27.—Wages of organized waiters have been increased $2 a week. No demand was made by these workers—that is, the employers didn't give the waiters a chance to present demands. The former acted first, and now everyone seems satisfied.

LABOR EDITOR RAPS BLATANT "PATRIOT"

Minneapolis, April 27.—Judge McGee, a member of the state public safety commission, is given first-page publicity by local daily newspapers because he notified Washington authorities that:

"Unless we get coal in the west, you will get no food and iron."

The impudence of this self-appointed spokesman for a patriotic people is resented by Editor Cramer of the Labor Review, who says:

"McGee's remark probably made many a westerner hang his head in shame. He showed by his narrow speech that the spirit of the great west has never gripped him nor touched his soul.

"The west, Minnesota, wants coal, and believes it will get coal, just as much as can be spared and keep the ships moving across the seas to the west front.

"But suppose it came to a point where a choice must be made whether the poor beings of the dirty tenements of the great eastern cities should have coal or whether we should have it out here. If there was not enough for both, we feel sure that the answer of the west, of Minnesota and of all real westerners would be: 'You keep the coal and if necessary we will cut down our forests and in some way we will keep warm.'

"And if it happened that the west could not get the coal which McGee thinks it is entitled to, does he believe for a minute that the people of the west, of Minnesota, would permit him to hold up shipments of iron to the steel mills of the east with our men at the front needing all the guns and ammunition which can be rushed to them?

"It is to be hoped that the people of the coal-producing sections of the United States will understand that McGee spoke just for himself and not for the people of the west. That they will understand that he was not elected to the position that he now holds, but was appointed by a governor who loves the corporations more than the people.

"McGee and his ilk have often complained about agitators who set class against class, but who is to be more roundly condemned than the man who with the nation at war would attempt to set one section of the nation against the other simply because his own personal policies could not be carried out."

LOW WAGES IN NEW JERSEY.

Newark, N. J., April 27.—The various charitable societies of this state are overburdened by demands made on them for the care of families whose bread winners, through sickness, are unable to support them. These workers are paid such a low wage that it is impossible to provide for the proverbial "rainy day" or maintain a depreciation fund, a term used by capitalists for money set aside to replace worn out equipment.

The above conditions were revealed by Robert L. Flemming, in his address as president at the opening session of the state conference of charities and correction.

Mr. Flemming made no reference to "rainy days" or depreciation funds—these are left to inference. But the "social worker" did insist that "we must protect our army of working men and women and the coming generation against the ravages and waste of illness."

His panacea is health insurance.

"We have been shocked," he stated, "by the high percentage of draft rejections on account of physical disability. As never before we need now to conserve, for present and future generations, the health and physical vigor of our people."

FATAL ACCIDENTS INCREASE.

Olympia, Wash., April 27.—Unexperienced men in hazardous industries is resulting in an increase in accidents in this state, according to the state industrial insurance commission. Forty deaths and 2,200 nonfatal accidents, is the toll during the month of March. This is by far the largest number of accidents that have been reported in any one month during the operation of the Washington workmen's compensation act.

The highest previous record was made in the month of November, 1916, when there was a grand total of 2,120 accidents.

In February of this year, there were 2,035 accidents, of which 35 were fatal. In January there were 2,096 accidents, of which 40 were fatal.

The majority of the fatal accidents come from the lumbering industry, but now the ship yards are running a close second. Of the fatal accidents in March, nine were ship yard accidents.

CARPENTERS PRAISED.

Indianapolis, April 27.—General Secretary Frank Duffy of the Brotherhood of Carpenters has made public a letter received from President Wilson in response to a telegram sent to him by the carpenters' officials in which they gave approval to the functions of the national war labor board.

President Wilson said:

"Your telegram of April 12 conveys a most welcome message. The action taken by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America in their regular quarterly session at Indianapolis does them the highest credit, and speaks a spirit of patriotism which I am sure will meet with the applause and approbation of all public-spirited men."

U. S. CONTROLS POLICE.

Philadelphia, April 27.—Uncle Sam is getting accustomed to controlling various activities in these war times, and has now pounced on the Philadelphia police department, and placed an officer of his marine corps in charge. The superintendent of police has been given a 30 days' leave of absence, which was unsolicited.

The government took this department out of the hands of the city because "clean up" suggestions were not complied with.

STREET CAR MEN WIN.

Grand Forks, N. D., April 27.—The Street Car Men's union has won its first dispute with the Grand Forks Street Railway company, which agrees that hereafter the union will be recognized and differences arbitrated.

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Everett, Wash., April 27.—A wage increase of 2 cents an hour has been ordered by the Puget Sound International Railway and Power company.

METAL WORKERS GAIN.

Washington, April 27.—Sheet Metal Workers' union No. 102 has secured a one-year agreement with employers. Wages are increased to $5.60 a day until August 31, when the rate will be $6.

HATTERS' EMPLOYERS BLAMED FOR TROUBLE

Danbury, Conn., April 27.—The United States government has failed to adjust a long dispute in the hatters' industry because employers demand the non-union shop, which they insist on referring to as "open shop."

The United States department of labor assigned Elmer J. Greenwalt to act as a conciliator.

After a week's effort, Mr. Greenwalt, who is immigration commissioner for the port of Philadelphia, made this public statement:

"I spent several days in Danbury making diligent inquiry as to the merits of the case, and found that while the hatters were not wholly blameless, a careful analysis of the entire situation shows that the burden of responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the manufacturers, who, in my judgment, precipitated without sufficient reason an industrial trouble that has brought incalculable harm to the business interests of the community.

"I found the hatters manifesting a candid spirit of open mindedness and entirely willing to meet and confer with the manufacturers. On the other hand, I found the employers quite willing to relate circumstances that prompted them to the decision to break away from the union shop; but they steadily declined to look with favor upon any proposition to meet in conference with either the national or local representatives of the hatters, in connection with myself or otherwise, for the purpose of conciliating their differences.

"I endeavored to show them that the position they took at the conference was an untenable one, if there was to be any hope of a settlement; but to no avail."

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Bridgeport, Conn., April 27.—Organized hatters are being tried by Superior Judge Kellogg on charges of violating an injunction secured by employers to enforce non-union conditions. A representative of the government, who was was in Danbury attempting to adjust this dispute, blames the employers for present conditions.

OPPOSE COURT MARTIAL LAW.

Washington, April 27.—President Wilson has declared his opposition to a bill introduced by United States Senator Chamberlain which would establish government by court martial and set aside civil court processes where a person is charged with seditious utterances.

In a letter to Senator Overman, the president said:

"I am heartily obliged to you for consulting me about the court martial bill, as perhaps I may call it for short. I am wholly and unalterably opposed to such legislation, and very much value the opportunity you give me to say so. I think it is not only unconstitutional, but that in character it would put us nearly upon the level of the very people we are fighting and affecting to despise. It would be altogether inconsistent with the spirit and practice of America, and in view of the recent legislation—the espionage bill, the sabotage bill and the woman spy bill—I think it is unnecessary and uncalled for."

If the Chamberlain bill becomes a law a man could be dragged from his home and ordered shot by a court martial. This law would nullify the constitution, depose courts and subject the entire country to martial law.

LABOR PLEADS FOR PEACE.

St. Louis, Mo., April 27.—The central trades and labor union has unanimously accepted the report of its committee which visited Washington in the interest of industrial peace in this city. The committee recommended that the president be asked to immediately convene the national war labor board in St. Louis "with the end in view of creating peace and harmonious relations between employers and employes."

What amounts to practically a general strike exists here because employers are attempting to check trade union organization by discharging workers. Many of these employers have secured large government contracts, but they have refused to accept the government's plan of settlement. The unionists declare that the employers appear to have an understanding regarding their present policy and if the government will commandeer these plants the strikers will return to work immediately.

WOMEN'S WAGE LAW UPHELD.

Olympia, Wash., April 27.—The state supreme court has upheld the Washington women's minimum wage law in a suit brought by Lillie Larson against J. R. Rice, owner of a moving picture theater at Chehalis.

Before the law was enacted the girl was paid $3 a week, and continued receiving that rate after the law became effective. The girl sued to recover the difference.

Later she was induced to sign an agreement to accept $40 in settlement. According to the minimum wage law she was entitled to $278.57.

Rice contended that the girl was of legal age and could make a contract of settlement. The supreme court holds that the state is interested in such cases and will not permit settlement in violation of the minimum wage law. A judgment against Rice for the full amount was affirmed.

ACT ON U. S. COURT HINT.

Minneapolis, April 27.—Laundry employers in this city are acting on a hint by the United States supreme court, which ruled in the Hitchman case that it is proper to issue an injunction against a unionist who attempts to organize a plant where the employer secured anti-union contracts or agreements from his employes.

The laundry proprietors are forcing illy-paid women and children to agree that they will not join a union and will not make any effort "to bring about the unionizing of that company against the company's wish."

Under the agreement, if a woman desires to exercise her constitutional right to join a trade union, she must quit her job.

ENGINEERS REDUCE HOURS.

Athens, Ohio, April 27.—Eight months ago stationary engineers in this city organized. To date they have perfected a 100 per cent union, reduced the work day from 12 to eight hours and increased wages 25 per cent.

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Baltimore, April 27.—Stationary engineers announce a wage increase of 10 cents an hour.

TEAMSTERS RAISE WAGES.

Springfield, Ill., April 27.—An agreement between the Teamsters' union and the Team Owners' association provides for wage increases of $1.50 a week.

MOONEY COURT ORDER IS NOT CONSISTENT

Madison, Wis., April 27.—In an editorial entitled "The Case of Mooney," the Capital Times says:

"Laboring men all over the country believing Mooney to have been convicted on perjured testimony, asked that the authorities give him another hearing. The president appointed a commission to investigate the facts and on its report he wired the governor for clemency for Mooney. Thereupon, certain business interests protested that the action of the president was an 'impertinence' and demanded that the law take its course and Mooney pay the forfeit of his life. The haters of organized workers have taken up the demand for Mooney's life and a local paper reechoes the savage cry.

"What a travesty on justice! What an example to set before the world! The courts of justice that do not hesitate to set aside a verdict for damages against a corporation or cut down a verdict for damages because it seems too high can find no relief for a man who has been convicted upon what appears to have been perjured evidence. When the copper companies of Bisbee, Arizona, unlawfully deported men guiltless of any offense, when these companies interfered when the draft by refusing to allow the men to return to their homes to enter the government service under the law, no word of protest ever fell from the system press. A report of a special commission showed that the copper companies were guilty of a great outrage against the working population of Bisbee. But nothing has been done to punish these powerful offenders.

"It were better for the country that the impression, only too well founded, that there is one course of justice for the laboring man and another for a wealthy employer be changed before it is too late."

DAYS OF COURAGE HERE.

Lafayette, Ind., April 27.—"These are the days of the man's man," says Editor Skemp of the Painter and Decorator. "Strength, courage and audacity and the will-to-do are the qualities that appeal to the imagination and command respect in times of storm and stress, and nowhere is the need for these qualities more urgent than in the trade union movement. In dealing with our opponents we have been unduly mild and modest, too much given to meeting them with hat in hand and with apology on lip. We must be more self-reliant, bolder in the assertion of our rights, more virile in the enforcement of our demands.

War—whether the strife be industrial or international—establishes new standards of value. The absurdity of the men and women who do things bowing to the will and whim of idlers and parasites, allowing them to direct their lives and to distribute the products of their labor—appropriating the lion's share to themselves—is dawning upon us. Changes radical and world-wide are impending. We must be alert and prepared to assert our right to the controlling voice in determining industrial and economic conditions under the new order."

GARMENT STRIKE ENDS.

St. Louis, Mo., April 27.—Striking garment workers have returned to work, following an agreement secured with the aid of federal mediators. Nearly 4,000 employes, over one-half of whom are women, have accepted the following:

"We, the striking employes of the various garment manufacturers, do hereby agree to return to work and submit all our grievances to the national labor board, provided the manufacturers will agree to reinstate all employes on strike to their former positions on or before April 25, without discrimination or prejudice, at the same wage scale and announced increases and at the same working hours as existed at the time of the strike."

The employes will now present their original demands to the mediators, whose decision shall be final. If the employers accepted this common sense plan before the strike, several weeks of idleness and much ill will would have been avoided.

BABIES DENIED MILK.

Washington, April 27.—That babies and little children are directly effected by decreased milk sales in American cities is shown by a study made in Baltimore by the children's bureau of the United States department of labor.

Of 756 children between 2 and 7 years old included in the study only 29 per cent are having fresh milk as a part of their daily diet this year, as compared with 40 per cent a year ago.

This situation is serious from the standpoint of infant health and welfare, according to government authorities. Fresh milk, it is declared, is an essential part of the diet of the small child for healthy growth and development. Despite this, fewer and fewer children are getting milk, as a result of rising prices.

UNION SHOP FOR PAINTERS.

Atlanta, Ga., April 27.—Because organized painters have made Atlanta a union shop town, as far as their calling is concerned, anti-unionists are howling "closed shop."

The painters reply that membership in their organization is open to every eligible, but that henceforth no eligible can enjoy the fruits of the labor of others. They say that the really "closed shop" is conducted by the anti-unionists, who refuse to employ members of organized labor. The painters refuse to be fooled by these tricky terms.

CANADIAN UNIONS GROW.

Ottawa, Ontario, April 27.—The war has not affected the growth of trade unionism, according to statistics of the Dominion of Canada department of labor. The total membership of Dominion trade unions at the close of 1917, was 204,[illegible], or an increase of 41,[illegible] over the previous year. Local unions increased [illegible] or a total of 1974.

STRIKEBREAKERS STRIKE.

Gid, La., April 27.—Strikebreakers imported to the oil fields of this district when unionists attempted to increase wages are now on strike. They have discovered that pats on the back and songs about "free and independent workmen" can not cope with old H. C. of L.

CONVICTS TO BUILD ROADS.

Trenton, N. J., April 27.—The state highway commission will employ convicts in the construction of the state highway system

PORTO RICO CONTROL IN HANDS OF TRUSTS

Washington, April 27.—"The Porto Rican government is in the hands of the tobacco and sugar trusts, which are attempting to incite the people to open rebellion, that the military forces of the United States may be employed," declared Santiago Iglesias, A. F. of L. organizer and a member of the Porto Rican senate.

Iglesias is now in Washington to confer with President Gompers on the strike of 30,000 Porto Rican sugar cane workers, who struck for higher wages, last February, after the companies had ignored requests first made in September, 1917.

"Every right guaranteed by the United States is ignored in Porto Rico," said Iglesias. "Governor Yager proclaims his belief in democracy, but insists on the tranquility of the island. He means a wage of 65 cents for a 10-hour day.

"After waiting for over five months for a favorable reply to their demands, the workers quit their employment. The governor immediately ordered the police not to permit meetings, to stop parades, and permit no communication between villages, as far as the propaganda of the strikers was concerned. Under these orders the police will not permit three workers to walk on the roads together. Where strikers have attempted to exercise the right of peaceful assemblage, they have been clubbed by the police, and 130 men have been arrested on every imaginable charge. In addition the police are driving coffee workers from the uplands into the cane fields to serve as strikebreakers.

"The sugar season begins in September and lasts until June, and these workers, 60 per cent of whom can not read or write, are expected to live all year on a wage of 65 cents a day during this seasonal work. And they are also expected to negotiate individual agreements with the sugar barons. The island is being mercilessly exploited by American trusts, about 70 per cent of the wealth being taken out of the island, against 40 per cent under Spanish domination."

BUILDING RESTRICTED.

Washington, April 27.—"Subordination of legal and personal interests to the public welfare with the most rigid economy in matters of public and private enterprises" was urged by the advisory committee of the capital issues committee in a circular letter which states that the government needs available labor and material for war purposes.

The circular closes with the following:

"It would be unwise and impracticable to attempt to restrict entirely the building of homes in communities where the population is rapidly increasing. To restrict building operations in communities where the growth is normal will necessarily result in some inconvenience and discomfort, but it is to be hoped that every one will be willing to practice self-denial and sacrifice to the extent of deferring building operations."

Under the circumstances it would seem as if the government is serving notice to banking interests throughout the country that loans should be so restricted; that new ventures not connected with the war should be frowned on; that building operations on a large scale for other than war purposes are to be eschewed, and that extension of credits other than in prosecution of the war may lead to caustic criticism, to say the least.

WORK WEEK REDUCED.

Boston, April 27.—Bottle Sorters and Washers' union No. 15233 has secured a one-year agreement with the Bottle Dealers' association. Wages are increased $2 to $3 a week; the work week is reduced four hours during June, July, August and September; time and one-half for overtime instead of time and one-quarter as previously paid; three holidays in the year with pay, instead of two; and an arbitration clause for the adjustment of grievances.

SHIP LAUNCHED IN 55 DAYS.

Washington, April 27.—The Skinner & Eddy corporation, Seattle, a strictly union ship yard, has launched the 8,800-ton ship West Lianga in 55 working days from the time the keel was laid. The best previous record, held by the same yard, was 64 days. The federal shipping board has notified the Seattle concern that "we are proud of your men and proud of your record."

DRUG CLERKS UNITE.

Wheeling, W. Va., April 27.—Drug clerks in the Wheeling district have organized and are now affiliated with the Retail Clerks' International Protective association.

STREET CAR EMPLOYES URGED TO STAY ON JOB

Detroit, Mich., April 27.—Everyone must make sacrifices; don't strike until every possible avenue for redress has been closed.

The above contains the gist of an appeal to the members of the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employes of America by President Mahon and the general executive board.

Attention is called to the importance of the work of street car employes at this time. "Millions of our fellow workers depend upon transportation to and from the various industrial locations where war necessities are being produced," it is said.

"It becomes our duty to carefully guard our actions and to exhaust all the resources of our association to bring about adjustment of differences with employing companies without cessation of work.

"We realize that the rising cost of living and the attempt of some companies to institute unreasonable retrenchment have caused unrest, but no matter how justifiable this unrest may be, it must not influence us to acts that will compromise our integrity as an organization of workers that stands by its agreements, and holds its obligations sacred.

"Our contracts with employing companies must be observed by our membership. We demand contract observance by the companies, and it is our duty to render strict observance in return. Wherever controversies arise between our local divisions and employing companies, ample means are provided in the contracts and the laws of our association for adjustment, without resort to drastic acts that repudiate obligations and are in contravention of the laws that the members of this organization have pledged themselves to abide by.

"No local division of this association has appealed to headquarters for counsel and help in the settlement of its controversies that assistance has not been given, and every effort made to effect a satisfactory conclusion."

CONTEMPTS DROPPED; INJUNCTION STANDS.

Washington, April 27.—Upon motion of attorneys for the Hitchman Coal and Coke company of West Virginia contempt proceedings instituted by the company against Frank J. Hayes, president, and nine other officers and members of the United Mine Workers were withdrawn in the United States supreme court. No reason was assigned by the coal attorneys.

Dropping these contempt cases has no bearing on the court's decision of December 10 last when it upheld Federal Judge Dayton's injunction against organized miners and flint glass workers.

Under Judge Dayton's rule an employer can secure an injunction where a worker joins a union, or attempts to unionize a plant, while remaining in the employ of a concern which secured an agreement from him that he would not take such action while remaining in its employ.

Any trade unionist suspected of interfering with such "contracts" can also be enjoined.

It is the rule of courts to set aside a contract or agreement that has been secured through duress or pressure. In the present case the court refuses to consider whether a worker has been forced, through necessity, to sign away his constitutional rights.

ANSWER PROFESSED GERMAN.

San Francisco, April 27.—Pacific coast trade unionists have unlimbered their heaviest guns against Walter V. Woehkle of the Sunset Magazine, who started the story that riveters and other ship yard workers were "laying down on the job."

Anti-unionists have ignored their denunciation of Hun propaganda and are spreading these yarns, started by Woehkle, who announced, just prior to this country's declaration of war, his high regard for Germany and the kaiser.

Unionists are now calling on the department of justice to intern this professed German. In a public letter to Woehkle, Business Agent Hansen of Ship Yard Laborers' union No. 15430 says:

"Do you know that there are places on these ships that men in order to do their work are forced to crawl around on their hands and knees and on their bellies like snakes, or lay on their back with nothing but a small candle for a light? Don't you realize that a misstep means serious injury or death in these dark holes?

"Put this same man on straight-away work, say, for instance, on the shell, deck or partitions, have every plate properly bolted, holes reamed, a good staging to work upon, and then you will see a marvelous change."

PLEADS FOR MOONEY.

Washington, April 27.—President Andrew Furuseth of the International Seamen's union has asked Governor Stephens of California to pardon Thomas J. Mooney for the offense for which he was convicted and that he be tried upon one of the other charges.

In urging that there be "no compromise by commuting the present sentence to life imprisonment," Furuseth, writing as a citizen of California, says:

"I cannot really believe the rumor, which has reached me, to the effect that the difficulty is to be met by commuting Mooney's sentence to life imprisonment. He is either guilty, in which case he should hang under our law, or he is not guilty, in which case he should be set free. To spare his life is acknowledging that he may not be guilty. To send him to prison upon suspicion or upon belief is or might be the autocratic act of an irresponsible monarch; it cannot be the act of the free state of California. The state cannot do this and remain a free state in the true sense of freedom."

HOUSING LAW UPHELD.

San Francisco, April 27.—Superior Court Judge Crowthers has upheld the California state housing law.

The board of health recently filed complaints against owners of 20 cheap lodging houses in this city, alleging that they were fire traps and a menace to life and health. The owners of the buildings contested this claim and insisted that the new hotel and lodging house act was confiscatory and unconstitutional.

The court swept aside this contention and ruled, in substance, that a law which provides for the welfare of human beings is not unconstitutional and that the particular law is of a progressive character and must be sustained because it is within the police power of the state.

MAIL BY AERO PLANE.

New York, April 27.—Plans have been completed for the opening on May 15 of the first air mail route to be established in America. The route between New York and Washington, with a short stop at Philadelphia, will be covered by mail planes in an actual running time of four hours, providing there is no head wind. Mail will be delivered within an hour after arrival at its destination. The war department will furnish two air planes, each capable of carrying 300 pounds of mail, and with a speed of nearly 90 miles an hour. The distance between this city and Washington is 227 miles.

SECURE EIGHT HOURS.

Vancouver, British Columbia, April 27.—A strike by oil refinery workers at the plant of the Imperial Oil company, has resulted in the company making the eight-hour work day general throughout Canada. This concern is a subsidiary of the Standard Oil company. Wages have also been increased.

JOIN UNION; GET 8 HOURS.

Fresno, Cal., April 27.—The new union of blacksmiths has reduced the work day from nine to eight hours. The change came so easily that these workers are now wondering why they didn't take collective action long ago.

SECURE RECOGNITION.

Toronto, Ontario, April 27.—For the first time in the history of their organization the Machinists' union has secured recognition by the Toronto Employers' association. Wages are advanced 5 cents an hour and working conditions are improved.